Remarks

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-9, 16-31 and 38-41 stand rejected. Claims 1, 16, and 38 are amended. Claims 1-9, 16-31 and 38-41 remain pending.

Claim Objections

Claims 16-31 are objected to because of an informality in claim 16. Claim 16 has been amended to correct the informality noted in the Office Action. Accordingly, applicants request that the objection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §102

Claims 1-9, 16-31 and 38-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,798,530 to Buckley, et al. ("Buckley"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Independent claims 1, 16, 23 and 38 all recite a "metavariable" that is "treated as a single variable containing data cumulative of variables for each parameter" and "defined by a metavariable table including at least one metavariable setting and two or more variable settings corresponding to each said at least one metavariable setting." The claims further recite that the metavariable is included in a datastream occurring between the data store of a transmitting device or process and one or more receiving devices or processes. To provide further clarification of a limitation inherently present in the claims, independent claims 1 and 38 have been amended to recite that the metavariable is transmitted from the transmitting device or process to the one or more receiving devices or processes. Support for this language may also be found in the present application, for example, on page 4, lines 18-19, of the specification.

Applicants submit that Buckley does not disclose a "metavariable" as recited and defined in the present claims and more specifically, does not disclose the transmission of a metavariable from a transmitting device to a receiving device. The only use of the prefix "meta" in Buckley refers to a "meta-printer" which is hardware, not a data structure. Moreover, the term "variable" does not appear in the text of Buckley. Applicants are unable to find any disclosure in Buckley of a data structure that meets the claimed characteristics of a "metavariable" and that is transmitted from a transmitting device or process to a receiving device or process.

The Office Action initially asserts that the "metavariable" in Buckley is the signal output to the meta-printer to cause the meta-printer to render a document and refers to column 6, line 63 to column 7, line 20. Nothing in the cited section of Buckley, however, indicates that the signals output to the meta-printer include a metavariable as recited in the claims. In fact, Buckley states "[t]he printer driver, using the defined virtual printers stored in the printer definition memory portion 132, converts the currently opened document into printer data and printer control commands and outputs the printer data and printer control commands through the input/output interface 110, the lines 210 and 220 and the print server 200 to the currently selected meta-printer 300 or 310." Buckley never states that the "printer data and printer control commands" are in the form of at least one metavariable as recited in the present claims. The disclosed "printer data and printer control commands" could include just a series of data variables that are passed between the computer and the printer as discussed in the Background section of the present application on page 2.

In reference to the metavariable being "treated as a single variable containing data cumulative of variables for each parameter," the Office Action asserts that the virtual printers define a different set of selected rendering parameter options and refers to column 4, lines 9-55 and column 4, line 63 to column 5, line 12. Although the virtual printers may define different sets of selected rendering parameter options, the virtual printers are not metavariables as recited in the claims and are not transmitted from a transmitting device or process to a receiving device or process. As described in column 7, lines 14-19, of Buckley, the printer driver uses the defined virtual printers stored in the printer definition memory portion 132 (in the computer 100) to convert the documents into printer data and printer control commands, which are then output to the meta-printer 300, 310. Thus, the virtual printers and parameters defined thereby appear to

reside only on the computer 100 and are not transmitted from the computer 100 to the meta-printers 300, 310.

In reference to the metavariable being defined by a metavariable table including at least one metavariable setting and two or more variable settings, the Office Action asserts that memory 130 contains a look-up sub-table of virtual printer definitions 440 comprised within a look-up table of printer drivers. Buckley does not appear to mention such a look-up table, however, and the Office Action does not establish how such a table would be inherent. Moreover, even if Buckley inherently disclosed such a look-up table, the table would not necessarily be a metavariable table as defined in the claims and would not be transmitted from a transmitting device or process to a receiving device or process.

The Office Action further asserts that the metavariable settings and variable settings refer to the setting portions 510, 520, 530 and 512-516, 522-528, 532-538, respectively, of the document rendering parameter options portion 500 shown in FIG. 5, which corresponds to the document options portion 440 shown in FIG. 4. These settings portions 510, 520, 530 and 512-516, 522-528, 532-538 and the document options portion 440, however, are merely portions of the graphical user interface 400 used to select options for defining virtual printers. Buckley does not disclose that the data represented by these portions of the GUI 400 are organized as a metavariable as recited in the claims. Moreover, as mentioned above, this parameter data appears to remain on the memory 130 on the computer and does not appear to be transmitted from a transmitting device or process to a receiving device or process, as recited in the claims.

Because Buckley does not identically disclose each and every element and limitation recited in amended independent claims 1, 16, 23, and 38, applicants submit that these independent claims, and the claims dependent therefrom, are not anticipated by Buckley. Accordingly, applicants request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) be withdrawn.

Conclusion

The claims have been shown to be allowable over the prior art. Applicants believe that this paper is responsive to each and every ground of rejection cited by the Examiner in the Action dated December 26, 2007, and respectfully requests favorable action in this application.

The examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-2121 (Reference Number LE9-99-111).

Respectfully submitted,

/Kevin J. Carroll/

March 26, 2008
Date

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